

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

BILL: SB 2832

SPONSOR: Senator Atwater

SUBJECT: Water Management District Planning and Reporting

DATE: March 30, 2004 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Molloy	Kiger	NR	Favorable
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

This bill directs the South Florida Water Management District (district) to undertake a pilot project to coordinate and consolidate certain legislatively mandated plans and reports regarding the status of district programs and water resources within its jurisdiction. The purpose of the pilot project is to determine how the district can provide information to the Legislature in a more effective and efficient manner.

This bill does not substantially amend or repeal existing sections of Florida Statutes, but does create new law.

II. Present Situation:

In 1972, the Legislature created five water management districts, including the South Florida Water Management District. The district, which today serves 16 counties in central and south Florida with a total population of more than 6 million residents, is responsible for operating and maintaining 1,800 miles of canals and levees, 25 major pumping stations, and more than 2000 water control structures. The district provides flood control protection and water supply protection to residents while coordinating efforts to restore and manage ecosystems from the Kissimmee River to the Everglades and Florida Bay.

The district is statutorily required to create approximately 35 annual plans or reports regarding the status of programs and water resources within its jurisdiction, and is required to review and comment on other water-related plans and reports. The other four water management districts are subject to similar requirements.

The district recently conducted a comprehensive review of its planning and reporting functions which included interviews with staff. The South Florida Water Management District Planning Evaluation Project (October, 2003) concluded that statutory reporting and planning requirements should be examined to determine if fewer reporting documents or even one reporting document could be used to replace the currently required reports.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1. Establishes legislative findings that plans and reports submitted to the Legislature and the Governor on the status of the district's programs and the state's water resources are necessary to ensure proper protection and management of those resources. Provides legislative findings that plans and reports submitted by the district should be better coordinated and possibly consolidated to allow interested persons to be better informed about the management of the state's water resources. Establishes legislative findings that increased access to such plans and reports will enhance and improve the protection of the state's water resources.

Section 2. Directs the district to commence a pilot project to coordinate, and where appropriate, consolidate legislatively mandated plans and reports regarding the status of district programs and water resources within its jurisdiction. In the pilot project, the district must:

- ❖ Review all such plans and reports that are required by law to be annually submitted to the Governor and the Legislature.
- ❖ Determine how the information submitted in annual plans and reports can be provided in a more efficient and effective manner.
- ❖ Submit any annual plans or reports due after the effective date of the act and prior to February 2, 2005 no later than February 15, 2005, and to consolidate such plans and reports where appropriate.

Provides that the February 15, 2005 submittal date is in lieu of any other deadline established in statute for plans and reports which may be due no later than February 1, 2005. The district's annual legislative budget requests, and tentative and final budget submissions to the Executive Office of the Governor may not be included in the pilot project.

Provides that unless reauthorized by subsequent legislation, the pilot project will cease on March 1, 2005.

Section 3. Requires the district to submit a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by February 15, 2005, on efforts to better coordinate, and where appropriate, consolidate legislatively mandated plans and reports. Reports must include any proposed statutory changes, including recommendations for proposed changes from other water management districts and the Department of Environmental Protection.

Section 4. Provides that the act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. Other Constitutional Issues:**V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:****A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The pilot project may require the district to shift staff temporarily to assist in the development of the consolidated report. However, the district estimates annual savings of \$300,000 in reduced costs associated with developing, reviewing, editing and producing more than 30 plans or reports. Annual publication and distribution savings are estimated to be \$50,000.

According to the district, consolidated reporting requirements for all five water management districts could result in annual savings of up to \$1 million.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Amendments:

None.